

Message Text

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16

ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4572

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

S E C R E T JAKARTA 11839

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MILI PINR ID

SUBJ: INDONESIAN ICCS CHIEF GENERAL SUHUD ON VIET NAM AND ICCS

REF: A. JAKARTA 8372 B. SAIGON 12277

1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY: DURING FAREWELL CALL ON ME SEPTEMBER 23, INCOMING INDONESIAN ICCS COMMANDER MAJOR GENERAL SUHUD (WHO EXPECTS ARRIVE SAIGON OCTOBER 6), EXPOUNDED GENERALLY PESSIMISTIC VIEW OF FUTURE OF GVN FOR WHICH HE ALREADY KNOWN (REF A), URGED US PRESSURE BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM TO BRING ABOUT IMPROVED SITUATION, AND TOUCHED ON PROBLEMS FACING ICCS DUE TO FINANCIAL SITUATION. END SUMMARY

2. SUHUD, WHO OBVIOUSLY FOLLOWS CLOSELY DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM, SAID HE CONTINUES TO FEEL THAT PSYCHOLOGICAL CLIMATE IN AGAINST GVN SINCE A) TROOPS' MORALE ON DECLINE BECAUSE THEY NEVER TAKE OFFENSIVE, AND B) CIVILIAN SECTOR ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY NORTH VIETNAM'S ABILITY TO SABOTAGE SOUTH VIETNAM ECONOMY. SUHUD FREELY ADMITTED THAT IN A "HEAD LONG MILITARY CONFRONTATION" GVN WOULD DEFEAT NORTH VIETNAMESE, BUT STATED LATTER TOO SMART TO ENGAGE IN SUCHAN ATTEMPT. HE NOTED THAT NORTH VIETNAMESE HAVE MANAGED TO ESTABLISH SUPPLY ROUTES WHICH CAN SERVICE THEIR

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ANTI-AIRCRAFT EMPLACEMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM, LARGELY

NULLIFYING EFFECTIVENESS OF GVN AIR FORCE.

3. WHEN I STATED THAT IT MY UNDERSTANDING THAT GVN HAD UNDERTAKEN EFFORTS TO INCREASE TERRITORY UNDER ITS CONTROL, SUHUD REPLIED THAT GVN SHOULD DO MORE RIGHT NOW SINCE ICCS NOT FUNCTIONING. (IMPLICATION, HOWEVER, WAS THAT SUHUD DID NOT AGREE GVN UNDERTAKING EFFECTIVE ACTION TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL TERRITORY).

4. SUHUD STRESSED THAT USG SHOULD PRESS BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM (ALTHOUGH IN DIFFERENT WAYS) TO ACHIEVE IMPROVEMENT IN SITUATION. SUHUD IS OF OPINION THAT MOSCOW HAS GREAT INFLUENCE WITH HANOI AND VIRTUALLY CONTROLS ACTIONS OF HUNGARIAN AND POLISH DELEGATIONS. HENCE HE FEELS THAT IN CONTEXT OF US-USSR DETENTE, WE COULD EFFECTIVELY PRESS MOSCOW TO ENSURE BETTER COMPLIANCE WITH PARIS ACCORDS. (SUHUD DISCOUNTED PEKING'S INFLUENCE ON HANOI, NOTING CHINESE ONLY SUPPLY SOME AMMUNITION). SUHUD SUGGESTED USG SHOULD URGE GVN TO BE MORE AGGRESSIVE IN ITS POLICIES- PARTICULARLY ITS MILITARY POLICIES- TO AVOID LOSS OF MORALE AND DISCOURAGEMENT WHICH COMES FROM CONSTANT- EVEN IF NOT DECISIVE- DEFEATS.

5. IN REGARD ICCS, SUHUD STATED THAT INDONESIA VERY CONCERNED OVER FINACIAL SITUATION AND SECURITY DANGERS ENTAILED. USING AS EXAMPLE TEAM SITE AT AN LOC, HE SAID THAT WITHOUT FUEL TO RUN GENERATORS ICCS COMPOUND LIABLE TO INDISCRIMATE SHELLING. SUHUD ALSO NOTED THAT ICCS TEAMS HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN FROM SEVERAL TEAM SITES TO REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS AT HUE AND MY THO. SUHUD AGREED WITH MY VIEW THAT COMMUNIST SIDE DOES NOT WISH COLLAPSE OF ICCS, BUT COMMENTED THAT COMMUNISTS DO NOT WANT ICCS PERSONNEL AT TEAM SITES BUT ONLY AT REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS. I NOTED GVN PAYING \$2.8 MISSION TO ICCS (REF B) AND REFERRED TO AFP REPORT PUBLISHED IN JAKARTA PRESS SEPTEMBER 23 THAT PRG HAS ISSUED STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 21 SUGGESTING THEY HAD NOT REJECTED TOTALLY IDEA OF PAYING ASSESSMENT. SUHUD MERELY COMMENTED THAT GVN PAYMENT WAS NOT A PERMANENT SOLUTION.

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6. BEFORE CLOSING SUHUD EXPRESSED HOPE THAT HE COULD CONTINUE HELPFUL RELATIONSHIP WITH EMBASSY SAIGON WHICH AMBASSADOR DHARSONO HAD ENJOYED. I ASSURED HIM THAT CHARGE LEHMAN AND HIS ASSOCIATES WOULD WELCOME OPPORTUNITY TO KEEPIN CLOSETOUCH WITH HIM AND INDONESIAN DELEGATION.

7. COMMENT: GIVEN CONTINUING PESSISMESTIC VIEW WHICH GENERAL SUHUD HOLDS TOWARDS SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETTMAN,

I SUGGEST THAT EMBASSY WILL WISH TOMAKE CONTACT WITH HIM
EARLY ON TO LAUNCH SUHUD ON RELATIONSHIP OF CLOSE
CONSULTATION WITH US.
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